



Looking Forward

Lessons Learned & Strategies for Meeting the Challenges

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Key Challenges

to Using MHSA Capital Funds

- NIMBY, community acceptance & fair housing
- Timelines for developing housing or other facilities
- Risks related to future costs to sustain new facilities
- Partnerships that effectively leverage resources, skills and experience of different organizations & public agencies

Solutions Will Require Changing Systems

What's In a Changed System?

- “Any door” leads to effective bundle of housing and services to support recovery and resiliency for clients and their families
- Funding for capital facilities and services are allocated in a single or coordinated process, timed as needed for project implementation
- Rules for project approvals and funding are not improvised project-by-project, or on exceptional basis, but established in routine practice

Key Components of Systems

and indicators of a changed system

- Power
- Money
- Habits
- Technology & Skills
- Ideas & Values

... all linked to achieve a mission or goal

Changes in Power

- Duties and authority are re-arranged
- Designated staff are given formal authority and responsibility for managing investments in supportive housing and other facilities needed for implementation of community services & supports
- Stakeholders who have not been heard or involved assume new or different roles – and have a real impact on decisions

Changes in Money

- New money (e.g. MHSA) is used as a catalyst for change
- Old money (“existing resources”) used in new ways through targeting, eligibility changes, technical solutions, incentives
- Funding for all components of supportive housing and other facilities projects (capital, operating, and supportive services) is available and reliable – and coordinated

Changes in Habits

- People and organizations interact with each other to create and sustain integrated solutions (e.g. housing and more effective services) for clients and their families as part of their normal ongoing routines and core work activities
- Requires new understanding and skills for working in a “multi-cultural” environment

Changes in Technology & Skills

Skilled practitioners at all levels can effectively deliver results

- Direct services are delivered in home and community settings based on promising practices
- Organizations have the capacity to engage in new activities (e.g. housing) or partnerships and to use new financing strategies
- New procedures & systems and cross-training for government agencies to implement, monitor and evaluate new program activities

Changes in Ideas & Values

- A new understanding of the problems to be solved
- Re-examine traditional definitions of success
- Re-define target populations based on shared priorities
- New performance expectations and definitions of success are widely shared

The “Art” of System Change

Besides their framework of rules and incentives, systems deal with **behavior**: habits, ideas, relationships. Change becomes a behavior-modification recipe:

- Persuasion
- Incentives
- Trust
- Practice

Effective Systems Change

Requires **persistent** pressure on **most** or **all** of the key elements over a **sustained** period of time

- This takes years, not months of effort

Often begins with:

- Persuasive short-term accomplishments
- Producing a new product or service by extraordinary means, just to show it can be done and is worth replicating

A *Few* of the Building Blocks

Where to begin ...

- Collaborative Planning
- Investment and Leveraging Resources
- Coordination, Streamlining, and Integration of Funding
- Building Provider Capacity

Expect Resistance

- The tools of System Change are meant to unsettle old systems while building new ones.
- Old systems will resist – they exist because they have survived pressures and onslaughts before.
- Services & Housing are not just separate systems, but (many) separate cultures, disciplines, and sets of values.

Closing Thoughts

- “To accomplish great things, we must not only act, but also dream; not only plan, but also believe.” *Anatole France*
- “Goals are dreams with deadlines.”
Diana Sharf Hunt

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